

## How Dry Is It?

Fresh water is our most precious commodity, a natural resource that can, in fact, be used up. We simply can no longer afford to take it for granted.

New Jersey is in the midst of the most severe drought in history.

To address the current emergency, Governor James E. McGreevey issued an executive order on March 4, 2002, authorizing the Department of Environmental Protection to set forth mandatory water restrictions and conservation measures tailored to the needs of each region of the state.

Now is the time for everyone to act. We must all remember that, as simple as it sounds, "Every drop does count."

September 2001 through February 2002 was the driest six-month period that New Jersey has experienced since 1895.

In the northeastern part of the state, reservoirs and groundwater levels are at record lows. Normally, these reservoirs should be reaching capacity in the spring.

Scientists have predicted that it will get worse before it gets better.

## Why Do We Need To Save Water?

It takes a long time to get into a drought condition and also a long time to recover from a serious dry spell. So, even a heavy storm or normal rainfall for one or two months cannot end this drought.

There is no quick fix. In fact, New Jersey's water supplies never fully recovered from the drought of 1999.

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***"Water is a shared blessing and a shared resource, but it is also a shared responsibility."***  
***— Governor James E. McGreevey***

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## Where Does Water Come From?

New Jersey's 8.4 million residents get their water from two sources: ground water and surface water.

Water knows no county, city, or township boundaries. What happens in one community can dramatically affect the water supply of its neighbors or the region.

About 1.2 billion gallons of potable water (drinkable quality) are used in New Jersey each day.

About 88 percent of the state's population receives its drinking water from public water supply systems, while about 12 percent is supplied by private wells.

This drought is particularly severe because water shortage is felt not only in New Jersey's reservoirs but also our streams, rivers and ground water.

Many citizens believe that if they turn on the tap, water will come out in infinite supplies.

## What Is the State Doing?

The Governor called for creation of an External Task Force to offer advice and valuable input as the department addresses New Jersey's drought emergency and long-term water management issues.

The department is holding workshops and information sessions and is also working with water providers to examine water-supply systems and needs for repairs and upgrades.

Mandatory restrictions on water use have been imposed statewide.

Yet these measures alone will not be enough to ensure that people conserve. Across the board, we need to be better stewards of our water resources and implement Governor McGreevey's vision for smart growth.

We must work together on this effort if New Jersey is to maintain its existing high-quality surface and ground water, enhance our water-supply protection measures, and ensure that the state has plentiful and clean water in the future.

## Can You Live Without Water?

### ***Consider these facts:***

- 💧 The human body is about 75 percent water.
- 💧 A Jersey Fresh tomato is 90 percent water.
- 💧 An individual uses up to 100 gallons per day, most of it in the bathroom.

**For more tips on how to save water, information on water-use restrictions, drought conditions, and DEP's information sessions, visit the department's drought web site, [www.njdrought.org](http://www.njdrought.org) or call the NJ Drought Hotline at 1-800-4-ITS-DRY (1-800-448-7379). Out-of-state callers may call 1-609-633-0560.**

## What Can Everyone Do To Help?

- Each person in New Jersey can take simple steps within their own homes and in their daily lives to save water.
- For example, repairing leaky pipes and faucets and stopping a slow, steady drip can save up to 350 gallons of water per month. This means savings on water and sewer bills, and if it's hot water that's leaking, savings on energy bills as well.
- Just turning the faucet off rather than letting it run down the drain while brushing teeth can save up to 20 gallons of water a day.
- Run dishwashers only when full.
- Make sure the dial on the washing machine is correctly set to the size of the load of laundry.
- Install water conserving faucet aerators and shower heads.
- Turn off automatic ice makers and use ice cube trays instead.
- Take a shower instead of a bath.
- Place a container of water in the refrigerator to chill, instead of letting the faucet run until the water is cold.
- Use water from the dehumidifier to water your plants.
- Plants do not need to be watered every day.



James E. McGreevey, Governor  
Bradley M. Campbell, Commissioner

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## Every drop does count

Learn about  
New Jersey's water  
shortage and  
how you can help.

[www.njdrought.org](http://www.njdrought.org)

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**1-800-448-7379**  
**1-800-4-ITS-DRY**



New Jersey Department of  
Environmental Protection